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# The Modern Languages Forum

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Formerly MODERN LANGUAGE BULLETIN, Established 1915

Volume XI, New Series I

APRIL, 1926

Number 2

## BACKGROUNDS IN LANGUAGE TEACHING\*

JOHN ADAMS, *University of London*

**A**MID the demands of the busy classroom we are apt to forget that in teaching a language we are at the same time initiating our pupils into a civilization. It is sometimes said that a man has as many realms of thought as he knows languages. In plain English, each language demands its own background, and though we may know the grammar and possess the vocabulary of a given language, we cannot be said to have mastered it until we can project our knowledge against a background that includes the life and thought of the people to whom the language is native. We have this crudely exemplified in the charts that are employed by those that use the direct method. We are all familiar with the pictures that are set before a class to form a basis of talks in the language of the country represented on the sheet before the pupils. The master talks to the youngsters about the scene pictured on the chart, and indicates with his pointer the various objects that enter into his conversation. There is no need to give the English equivalent of an object that can be seen by every pupil in the class. Sometimes, indeed, the advantage of the direct method comes out very conspicuously, as when some object has to be talked about that does not occur in American life at all, and therefore has no English name.

But the picture must go farther than merely supply a vocabulary. It must create an atmosphere. The people presented in the picture must look the part. They must be dressed appropriately, and the scene in which they appear must suggest the country

dealt with. The more foreign the general appearance of the scene the better for the purpose of the modern language teacher. Further, the greater the number of pictures available, the better. All the seasons should be represented so that the pupils may see the country under all aspects. As many different social strata as are available should be represented, so that the range of second hand experience of the English-speaking pupils may cover as wide an area as possible.

The pictures are usually supplemented by as many actual objects as can be obtained from the country studied. Newspapers in the strange language, books actually printed and bound abroad, characteristic garments, toys, jewelery, implements and tools, everything in fact that make up what is now technically known as *realia* are gathered in abundance, and if the onlooker speaks contemptuously of a "junk room" the progressive teacher is not unlikely to accept the challenge and do his best to make the modern language room as near a replica as he can contrive of an actual room of the country whose language he is treating. In High Schools we have all seen rooms that reproduce what was to be found in ancient Rome or Athens, and there is no valid reason why Paris or Madrid should not be equally favored.

The point in all this comes to be the fitting in of linguistic and social elements. The teacher has to realize that all the new words and phrases he introduces must be presented against a different background from that of the everyday life of his pupils, who must, accordingly, be kept always on the *qui vive* for this new orientation. In entering the class-room the pupil should leave behind him as much as is necessary of his workaday backgrounds, and get a new one. Just as the clef mark in music determines the meaning of each of the note marks

\* Abstract of an address delivered before the regular meeting of the Modern Language Association of Southern California, at Belmont High School, Los Angeles, October 31st, 1925. Dr. Adams was Exchange Lecturer in Education at the University of California for the year 1925. For eminent services in various fields of activity, the King of England in 1924 conferred the knighthood upon Professor Adams.—Editor.



that follow, so should the class-room give a new value to all the sounds and sights dealt with there. We have to learn the lesson of the custom of writing foreign words in italics when they occur in English type. The words *main* and *teller* in Roman characters mean "chief" and "a man at a bank counter," but when italicised they mean "hand" and "plate." So the introduction of pictures and *realia* in the class-room maintain a sort of permanent background that determines the character of all the words used during the modern language hour.

It will be seen that underlying all this we have a recognition of the importance of ideas in relation to words. We are prone to think that a foreign language is a matter of words and phrases, whereas ideas are of at least as much importance. Naturally a great many ideas are common to the mental contents of the English pupil and the ordinary native of the country whose language is being studied. But the ideas in the two mental contents have a somewhat different atmosphere, and this atmosphere is to be caught only by contact with the ideas *in situ* as it were. Wherever possible the pupil's ordinary experience should be compared and contrasted with the experience of those living under the conditions of the country studied. In a really well co-ordinated school course the atmosphere of the country whose language forms an integral part of the curriculum should be recognized in classes other than those dealing with the foreign language. In English, special stress should be laid on derivations from the selected language; in the geography and history lessons the lime-light should always be turned on anything concerning the selected country; economic and other illustrations should be drawn by preference from this country, and altogether it should have in the school course a sort of "most favored" position.

It will be seen that all this implies a change of the incidence of attention in the study of the foreign language. Words and phrases will need as much attention as ever, but this attention will be deflected in such a way as to reach its goal *via* the subject matter. In language teaching of all sorts the subject matter has not as a rule obtained the important position it deserves. Vocab-

ulary and grammar have usurped a place to which they are hardly entitled. It is not that they can be neglected, but merely that they must not be allowed to elbow out one of the best means of promoting their own interests. For words are naturally best studied in relation to the ideas they represent. If an idea be, as Locke describes it, "whatsoever is the object of the understanding when a man thinks," it is obvious that ideas supply the basis on which language is built. We are familiar with the saying that "science is but a well-made language." If even scientific people recognize the close connection between ideas and words, it is only courteous for teachers of language to meet them half way and recognize the importance of subject matter. The recent teachings of psychology in the matter of the correlation of ideas all point to the importance of the real behind the verbal, in other words to the value of backgrounds. A background suggests a scene, and a scene suggests a stage. So that a rather useful figure can be suggested of the process of learning and expressing our thoughts. Mental scene-shifting is getting to be recognized as one of the most important processes in learning and teaching. Such phrases as "apperception masses," "idea-clusters," "complexes" all suggest processes in which the language teacher is profoundly concerned. His business is really so to build up a system of words that they shall fit in to the needs of the pupil in dealing with the environment in which he finds himself. It is a ghastly blunder if he confines himself to the merely verbal side of his work. The language as such must without doubt get the major share of the teacher's attention, but experience will certainly prove to him that the amount of energy that is now being increasingly directed to the building of backgrounds is well-expended and will bring rich returns.

It will be remembered that Thomas Hobbes tells us in his "*Leviathan*" that "words are the counters of wise men, but the money of fools," a saying that language teachers may well lay to heart. All the symptoms appear to show that they are realizing the position, and are taking their stand in the phalanx of "wise men."

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## REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES OF THE N. E. A. COMMISSION ON THE CURRICULUM

THE position of the Committee on Modern Foreign Languages is in some respects different from that of other committees working under the Commission on the Curriculum. Subjects taught in the first six grades have for some time been the object of intensive study by the Commission, and have been treated at considerable length in the Third Yearbook of the Department of Superintendence. In American public schools modern foreign languages are not usually begun below the seventh grade, and they are now considered for the first time by the Commission.

The present movement for curriculum revision differs from previous efforts of a similar nature in its insistence upon basing all conclusions not on opinions, no matter how generally they may be held, but on facts ascertained by extended and carefully controlled investigations. Such investigations demand a wide field, definite standards of achievement, the co-operations of a very large number of workers, and considerable technical skill in giving tests and interpreting results. At the present time the American Council on Education, with the financial aid of the Carnegie Corporation and the hearty co-operation of the Bureau of Education at Washington, is carrying out a modern foreign language survey of the most thorough and exhaustive kind, with ample resources and three full-time investigators, under the guidance of a Committee of Direction and Control which includes a score of the best known teachers in America and represents both the colleges and the secondary schools. It is clear that your committee has no equipment for research comparable with that of the Modern Foreign Language Study,\* and that it would be foolish to attempt to duplicate the arduous and expensive labors of the Study or to weary busy schoolmen by a second series of questionnaires covering the same field. It is equally evident that any report made before the results of the Study are available would have to be regarded as incomplete and subject to considerable revision in the light of

the information that the Study is expected to furnish. For this year, therefore, the Committee on Modern Foreign Languages restricts itself to a brief report of progress, in which it calls attention to several previous reports with which everyone interested in modern language work should be familiar, and to certain conclusions reached in these reports which are undoubtedly accepted by a very large number of our best teachers of modern foreign languages. There is reason to believe that the results of the Study will in general confirm these conclusions.

The reader who desires to know something about the beginning of modern foreign language work in America can not do better than to get Bulletin 1913, No. 3, of the United States Bureau of Education, *The Teaching of Modern Languages in the United States*, by Charles H. Handschin. Not only does this give an outline of the progress of modern foreign language study in the United States, but it has also a useful bibliography and some worth-while comment on texts and methods.

The first report of a general nature to which we would call attention is that of the Committee on Secondary School Studies, often referred to as the Report of the Committee of Ten, published in 1893 as No. 205 of the U. S. Bureau of Education. This Committee, appointed at the meeting of the National Education Association, July 9, 1892, organized nine conferences on the most prominent subjects taught in secondary schools, the Conference on Modern Languages consisting of Charles H. Grandgent, William T. Peck, Joseph L. Armstrong, T. B. Bronson, A. N. van Daell, Charles Harris, Sylvester Primer, John J. Schobinger, I. H. B. Spiers, and Walter D. Toy. From the report submitted for the Conference by Charles H. Grandgent, Chairman, we quote the following passages, which we regard as no less worthy of attention and application today than when they were published thirty-two years ago:

"The objects to be attained are: (a) a good pronunciation; (b) ability to understand very easy German or French† when

\* Office address: 561 West 116th Street, New York City, N. Y.—Editor.

† Spanish, Italian, and any other given foreign language would now be included.—Editor.

it is spoken; (c) ability to read, without painful effort, simple stories in the foreign language; (d) ability to construct short German or French sentences, applying the elementary rules of grammar." (Today we should speak of these as "immediate objectives.")

"Not a moment should be lost in contending with difficulties that have no necessary connection with the language." "As long as English versions are made, teachers should insist upon idiomatic English." "The chief object of our modern language courses is, as has been said, the ability to read French and German; but to do this the student must know more than the definitions of the words he sees; he must be able to imagine the phrases coming from the lips of a Frenchman or German,—he must know how they sound to a native hearer, and how they put themselves together in the mind of a native speaker." "Something that approaches this knowledge can be acquired by practice in pronunciation, conversation, and composition." "The foreign language should be used as much as possible in the classroom." "In teaching foreign sounds great care must be taken lest the pupil confirm himself in bad habits; uncorrected pronouncing is as bad as none. As often as may be, the beginners should speak the sentences immediately after the teacher; a very little careful practice of this kind will do more good than any amount of original pronunciation by the pupil." "Grammatical abstractions should not be forced upon the pupil too early." "Difficulties can best be overcome by taking them one at a time. In studying language the three enemies that the novice must encounter are pronunciation and spelling, vocabulary, and grammar: singly they can be mastered; united they are likely to prove too strong."

The Conference advised beginning the foreign language earlier than was the practice at that time. "Wherever thoroughly competent teachers can be secured, we are of the opinion that there should be introduced into the grammar schools an elective course in German or in French." "Living languages seem to us better adapted (than Latin) to grammar school work, both on account of the greater ease with which they can be taught and learned, and because of their closer relation to the interests and

ideas of today." "It is essential that pupils should study at least one language long enough to reach some degree of maturity in it." "We regard as entirely inexpedient the introduction of two foreign languages in the same year." "The study of a new language should present a sufficient number of weekly exercises to enlist and hold the full interest of the pupil." "In the case of young children, especially, it is found that more is accomplished by short but frequent lessons than by longer ones at greater intervals."

It is hoped that these quotations may lead the reader to procure and study the entire report, for all persons who teach or who direct the teaching of modern foreign languages should be familiar with these beaconlights along the way we have traveled.

Six years after the publications of the Report of the Committee of Ten, the National Education Association Departments of Secondary and Higher Education published a report from its Committee on College Entrance Requirements. This included a report from the Committee of Twelve, appointed by the Modern Language Association of America at the request of the National Education Association. This committee had begun its work in 1897, and for two years had endeavored, with the means at its disposal, to do what The Modern Foreign Language Study, with far greater resources, is now undertaking. The value of the report may be inferred from the fact that it is still the basic authority on the teaching of modern foreign languages; although the later work of individual authors has supplemented it with valuable contributions in accordance with the educational progress of the last quarter-century. The committee consisted of Calvin Thomas, Chairman; E. H. Babbitt, B. L. Bowen, H. C. G. Brandt, W. H. Carruth, S. W. Cutting, A. M. Elliott, C. H. Grandgent, G. A. Hench, H. A. Rennert, W. B. Snow, and B. W. Wells. Different sections of the report treat of the value of the modern foreign languages in secondary schools, of methods of teaching, the preparation of teachers, the teaching of modern foreign languages in grades below the high school, standards of achievement, and the details of courses recommended. The modern language teacher can read portions of

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this report a great many times and spend long hours digesting and assimilating its contents before he will have exhausted its possibilities. We make no quotations, for we assume that everyone with any interest at all in the teaching of modern languages has read it *in toto*, and that every modern language teacher has it on his bookshelf.

In 1912 the National Education Association appointed two sub-committees to report upon the reorganization of various high school subjects, and the following year these and other committees were included in a Commission on the Reorganization of Secondary Education. A preliminary report of the chairman of the Committee on Modern Languages was printed in Bulletin, 1913, No. 41 of the U. S. Bureau of Education.

Successive sections of the "Statement" deal with aims, method, material, details of procedure, teachers, and texts. Three chief aims of the First Year, profitable alike to those who are to continue studying the foreign language and to those who will drop it soon, are phonetic accuracy, careful use of words, and interest in the foreign nation. To gain a general command of the language is the immediate aim of the Second and Third years; while the Fourth year allows more careful attention to grammatical and rhetorical form, and may differentiate the instruction, selecting literary, commercial, or scientific reading material as the needs of particular students may require. The section on method and that on details of procedure contain many helpful sugges-

tions concerning class-room practice; what is said about texts and material for study is of a general nature, with no mention of any particular books; and the brief remarks on the preparation of teachers treat the problem as primarily one for the college to solve.

While your Committee might extend this review by giving its present opinion on various questions, we deem it wiser to say nothing further until the work of The Modern Foreign Language Study shall have given us a considerable body of facts on which to base conclusions.

Respectfully submitted,

WILLIAM S. SNOW, Assistant Superintendent of Schools, Boston, Massachusetts, Chairman.

MARO S. BROOKS, Superintendent of Public Schools, Medford, Massachusetts.

JACOB GREENBERG, Director of Foreign Languages in Junior High Schools, New York City.

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GEORGE W. H. SHIELD, Acting Supervisor of Modern Languages, City Schools, Los Angeles, California.

## UNE VISITE CHEZ UN MAÎTRE DU DRAME CONTEMPORAIN

ALEXANDER G. FITE, *University of California, Southern Branch*

C'EST tout récemment encore que le public parisien des grandes "premières" répétait le nom de François de Curel, doyen acclamé du théâtre moderne; c'est tout récemment encore que la presse parisienne et française commentait cet événement, longtemps attendu, longtemps discuté, une nouvelle pièce du "Maître". Cette pièce, "La Viveuse et le Moribond" qui vient d'être représentée au Théâtre des Arts au mois de janvier 1926, complétait en effet avec "Terre Inhumaine" du même

auteur, et "Le Tombeau sous l'Arc de Triomphe" de Paul Raynal (joué à la Comédie Française en 1924) la grande trilogie des pièces d'après-guerre sur la psychologie du soldat au front, à l'arrière, ou de retour dans ses foyers lorsque la grande lutte est terminée.

A l'occasion de cette dernière pièce de François de Curel les grands critiques dramatiques, Claude Berton dans "Les Nouvelles Littéraires" (16 janvier 1926), et André Rouveyre dans "Le Mercure de

France" (premier février 1926) rappelaient la carrière littéraire, si originale, du grand écrivain, qui est hélas, à peu près inconnu en Amérique.<sup>1</sup> Tous s'inclinaient avec respect devant cette glorieuse carrière d'homme de lettres et voici en quels termes élogieux Claude Berton nous parle de l'écrivain qui a maintenant 70 ans passés:

"François de Curel a vieilli intouché. La volonté raffermie par le grand air, l'âme enfermée quand il le veut, dans le cercle magique du rêve dont il possède la faculté d'évoquer à son gré la protection et l'enchantement. A chaque instant il a mis cette barrière entre lui et le monde, il a fait appel à son imagination qu'il nomme "bonne à tout faire", et cette servante a été sa protectrice, son inspiratrice, sa récréation."

Et ces paroles si vraies évoquaient pour moi un souvenir bien cher, un souvenir qui m'est précieux entre tous. Je revoyais cette belle après-midi de juin à Paris, il y a presque deux ans, où j'avais eu l'honneur de faire la connaissance de Monsieur de Curel et où il m'avait indiqué la trame générale de cette pièce que son fidèle ami Antoine montait il n'y a pas quatre mois au Théâtre des Arts.

Monsieur de Curel est d'aspect débonnaire: figure riante et yeux malicieux sous des paupières plissées; vite, il me met à mon aise, causant avec bonhomie de mille sujets variés. Il me dit son plaisir à voir qu'on s'occupe de son théâtre en Amérique, quoique, ajoute-t-il, avec un large geste, "L'Amérique est encore un pays neuf, un peu jeune pour que mon théâtre y plaise; un auteur comme moi ne sera jamais très bien compris ou goûté aux Etats-Unis, car je suis un peu trop franc et brutal pour l'épiderme exagérément sensitif et la pudibonderie des descendants des Puritains. Vous savez, je ne m'occupe point de prêcher ou de réformer comme mon collègue Brioux."

Je tâche de rassurer Monsieur de Curel et lui parle des progrès que la littérature réaliste et franche a faits en Amérique

depuis vingt ans. Nous avons accepté et admiré des Russes, des Polonais, des Scandinaves, des Italiens bien plus réalistes que lui. Je fais mention des brillants efforts des "Little Theatre", des Provincetown Players, etc., ce à quoi il semble vivement s'intéresser; je cite Dreiser, Cabell, O'Neill et d'autres, dont certaines oeuvres feraient pâlir de modestie ses pires pièces. Mais il n'est pas très convaincu; il me parle de la censure artistique aux Etats-Unis, de la multiplicité des sectes religieuses et de la législation morale, de la prohibition, des "lois bleues" et des "nez bleus". "Vous ferez mieux Monsieur, en y mettant un peu plus de mélodrame, d'adapter une de mes pièces pour le cinéma", me dit-il soudain d'un ton un peu railleur!

Cependant—mon enthousiasme le touche-t-il un peu?—il a fini par m'accorder cette permission que je recherchais depuis si longtemps, et, pour que je sois un peu mieux documenté sur sa vie, ses idées et la genèse de ses oeuvres, il m'invite—O bonne fortune inespérée!—à venir passer une semaine à causer et à chasser avec lui dans son magnifique domaine près de la frontière d'Alsace-Lorraine.

C'est là qu'il fait la chose que je désire le plus au monde: "Puisque vous y tenez tellement", me dit-il, "*je vais vous parler de moi-même*, mais de grâce, ne pensez point, si je me rends à vos prières, que mon humble personne est ce qui m'intéresse le plus au monde!" Tant s'en faut, car Monsieur de Curel est un des causeurs les plus brillants et charmants que j'aie jamais connus, et il n'a que trop souvent tendance à me parler de mille sujets—intéressants, bien sûr, mais qui ne sont point *lui*—et il me faut le ramener tout doucement à ce qui pour moi est la question primordiale, comment il fut conduit, lui, vicomte et millionnaire, à entrer dans la lutte dramatique qui était si vive au commencement de ce siècle. A travers lui comme l'âme Lorraine m'a été clairement révélée, l'âme de cette forte race qui depuis mille ans a joué un si grand rôle dans l'histoire de l'Europe; comme j'ai retrouvé en lui les traces encore très marquées de ses fiers ancêtres, les preux de Charlemagne et les chevaliers des Croisades qui sont allés se battre pour le Saint Sépulcre!

Car du côté de son père il descend d'une

1. (a) Trois de ses pièces seulement ont été traduites en anglais: "Les Fossiles" (traduit par Barrett Clark, *The Fossils*, dans *Four Plays of the Free Theatre*, Stewart and Kidd); "L'Envers d'une Sainte" (traduit par Barrett Clark, *A False Saint*, dans *Drama League Series*, Doubleday Page & Co.); et "Le Coup d'Aile" (traduit par Alice Van Kaathoven, *The Beat of the Wing*, dans *Poet Lore*, Vol. XX, No. 5).

(b) Textes à l'usage des Universités: H. A. Smith, "La Nouvelle Idole," The Century Co., 1924. A. G. Fite, "Le Repas du Lion," Oxford University Press, 1926.

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ancienne famille noble qui habite la Lorraine depuis un temps immémorial; du côté de sa mère il vient de la famille de Wendel qui depuis longtemps possède les principales usines métallurgiques de Lorraine et de Belgique. Ce fut un de Wendel qui au XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle, par ordre du roi, fonda la célèbre usine Creusot. Lui-même était destiné tout jeune à suivre la carrière d'ingénieur et de maître de forges, mais par suite de la stupidité officielle des Allemands, qui, après 1871, refusèrent de le laisser exercer sa profession dans ce qui était alors région annexée—à moins qu'il ne devienne sujet allemand—il dut renoncer à diriger ses mines, et fut sauvé pour les lettres françaises.

Pendant plusieurs années, étant alors sans but fixe, Monsieur de Curel voyagea et observa beaucoup, mis ainsi à "l'école de l'humanité". Quelle précieuse expérience de pouvoir se documenter sur les hommes, leurs habitudes de pensée, et leurs manies aussi, avant de commencer à les reproduire par écrit! Jeune encore, il débuta par des romans et des contes, mais encouragé par une critique de Charles Maurras, qui trouvait que ses récits étaient trop dramatiques pour le lent mouvement d'un roman, il essaya le théâtre.

Sa façon d'entrer dans le monde théâtral est une histoire extrêmement fascinante, maintenant devenue célèbre dans les annales du drame français, et aussi un tribut à la perspicacité d'Antoine, qui a renouvelé et rajeuni un art qui baissait rapidement.

Il avait écrit trois pièces en 1891, "Sauvé des Eaux", "L'Envers d'une Sainte", et "La Figurante" et les avait soumises, l'une après l'autre, à tous les théâtres réguliers, mais . . . on n'en voulait point! C'était trop neuf, trop dangereux, trop peu technique—bref, c'était différent, et à ce moment-là, quitter les vieilles ornières devenait du vice. Sur le point de se décourager, mais non de remanier ou d'altérer ses pièces pour qu'elles conviennent au goût public, il pensa à Antoine, qui à ce moment-là luttait péniblement contre toutes sortes d'obstacles moraux et matériels<sup>2</sup> pour lancer de jeunes écrivains ayant des idées neuves pas encore acceptées dans les grands théâtres. Depuis, tant d'entre eux

sont devenus célèbres! François de Curel lui soumit les trois manuscrits séparément sous le nom de trois amis, dans l'espoir que peut-être l'un d'eux serait accepté. A sa très grande joie tous trois étaient chaleureusement accueillis, et lorsqu'Antoine eut appris ce pieux mensonge, il félicita le jeune dramaturge et lui prophétisa le brillant avenir qui devait en effet être le sien un jour. Tout de suite Antoine se mit à l'oeuvre et monta une des trois pièces: c'est au Théâtre Libre en 1892 que l'on donna pour la première fois "L'Envers d'une Sainte" en même temps que la "Blanchette" d'Eugène Brieux.

Le lendemain de la représentation, de Curel avait une grande presse . . . divisée en deux camps comme il en a toujours été depuis lors: les critiques qui le portent aux nues, et ceux qui lui refusent aucun talent. Des indifférents, il n'y en a guère parmi ceux qui le connaissent. Ce fut Jules Lemaître qui parmi les premiers trouva de réels mérites à cette nouvelle pièce et entrevit dès le début que François de Curel surpasserait de loin en style et en matière ses confrères du Théâtre Libre. Mais "l'oncle" Sarcey, et en même temps la plupart des critiques de la vieille école (nourrie des innombrables vaudevilles de mauvais goût de Scribe et de Sardou, et des pièces moralisantes et demi-romantiques d'Augier et de Dumas fils) trouvèrent la pièce impossible et ne virent en son auteur qu'un impertinent écervelé, puisqu'il avait violé tant de règles.

Sarcey avouait à contre-cœur que ce que le jeune auteur montrait était peut-être exact, mais il ajoutait, cependant, que les spectateurs n'allaient point au théâtre pour contempler la vérité mais pour avoir l'illusion bienfaisante de s'y amuser. C'est ce même jugement de petit bourgeois fatigué, qui ne veut pas se donner la peine de penser, qui fait qu'en Amérique, cinéma, mélodrame, et comédie musicale satisfont entièrement à nos besoins soi-disant "artistiques."

Nous n'avons pas de place ici pour parler des changements que François de Curel a introduits sur la scène, de son oeuvre importante et de son influence. Cela fera l'objet d'un autre article, LE THEATRE DE FRANÇOIS DE CUREL. Suffit-il de dire qu'à force de travailler intensément et de publier lentement (une pièce tous les trois

2. Voir André Antoine "Mes Souvenirs sur le Théâtre Libre," Fayard & Cie, Paris, 1923; page 23 et suivantes.



ans en moyenne) il a continué à grandir, et, enfin, avec "La Nouvelle Idole," La Comédie Française en 1914 lui a ouvert toutes grandes les portes qui lui avaient été jadis si durement fermées. Autre marque flatteuse de la grande estime où l'on le tient, il est entré en 1919 parmi les quarante "Immortels" de l'Académie française, et ses pièces récentes, mieux connues et mieux appréciées du grand public, ont eu un succès vraiment "populaire," par exemple "L'Ame en Folie" en 1919, a été représentée plus de 400 fois de suite et a eu plusieurs reprises depuis lors.

François de Curel a donc atteint l'apogée de sa carrière littéraire et il le reconnaît sans fausse modestie, comme il convient à un homme de son âge et de son génie, à qui le succès a donné le droit d'être franc. Et c'est pourquoi cette visite en Lorraine a fait sur moi une impression si vive et si durable. A Paris, dans l'atmosphère banale d'une maison d'éditions, j'avais certes senti tout le charme et toute l'exquise courtoisie de l'écrivain, mais c'est à Ketzling, dans le domaine de ses pères, au milieu de ce cadre, sobre et grandiose à la fois, que l'homme

s'est révélé à moi. Dans ce décor rugueux qui l'a vu grandir, au milieu de ces bois noirs, égayés cependant de la plaque d'argent de l'étang et du ruissellement des eaux vives, j'ai découvert pourquoi le génie de François de Curel était marqué d'une empreinte aussi vigoureuse et aussi personnelle.

Là, j'ai eu le privilège, que—si j'en crois ses contemporains—peu d'hommes ont, d'observer une âme forte et simple; forte . . . parcequ'elle a vécu en contact intime avec la Nature, une Nature saine et fruste, n'ayant rien de l'énervant effet des paysages exotiques; simple . . . parcequ'elle s'intéresse aux "simples," bêtes ou gens, en un mot, à tout ce qui existe. Quelle meilleure documentation sur un écrivain peut-on avoir que de l'étudier dans son milieu, de le voir vivre lui-même, lorsque, comme c'est le cas chez Monsieur de Curel, sa vie et son milieu se sont si fortement reflétés dans son théâtre.

C'est donc à ma visite en Lorraine que je dois d'avoir mieux compris la rudesse et la puissante vision du génie de Monsieur de Curel, et c'est à cette visite que je dois aussi de respecter et d'admirer encore plus le Maître du drame contemporain en France.

## QUARTERLY FRENCH BOOK-LETTER

WM. LEONARD SCHWARTZ, *Stanford University*

THE VICTOR HUGO chair at the Sorbonne, founded by a public subscription of 150,000 frs. was inaugurated by Fernand Gregh on February second. In his course of lectures, Gregh showed that all the elements of Parnassian, decadent, and symbolist poetry can be found in Hugo. This chair has been assigned to André Le Breton. I want to call attention here to two fine studies by Madame Duclaux,—her life of Hugo published in English by Holt, 1921, and the brief *Victor Hugo* (Plon, boards 6 frs.) contributed to a series of "noble lives" for adolescents. It is a frank interpretation of the poet's writings through his environment, ambitions and sorrows.

Edmond Estève, who has just been called to assist Professor Le Breton at Paris, gives in *Sully Prudhomme, poète sentimental et poète philosophe* (Boivin, 9 frs.) a biography and criticism of a poet who appeals strongly to Anglo-Saxon readers. Braving the present current of contempt for Sully's

poetry, Professor Estève (p. 211) has given him a high place among the sonneteers, between Bellay and Heredia. Being founded on the poet's *Journal intime* (1922), and the *Lettres à une amie*, 1911, this biography supplements that of Zyromski, 1907.

Estève's charming lecture, *Longfellow et la France* appeared in the Bowdoin College Bulletin.

Teachers sometimes need to find a good French story which they can be sure is not known to anyone in their classes. A good collection of this character is the *Anthologie des Conteurs d'Aujourd'hui* of A. Fage (Delagrave, red sheepskin, 17 frs, paper, 7 frs. 50). The seventy-one story tellers represented in this volume are known for their contributions to the daily papers. The anthology is also interesting because the writers themselves chose the tales by which they are represented. Facsimile autographs, portraits and "bio-bibliographical" notes add to its value. The stories, selected

mostly for their lyrical or emotional qualities, may be put into any hands. By the way, I wish some one from Northern France would tell me what kind of pipe is called "une boraine" by the smokers of that district.

*Rules of Order for the French Club*, by Dr. Caroline Stewart (Oxford University Press, 25 cents), is a pamphlet containing a French constitution in 52 articles for the use of Cercles français, interspersed with appropriate parliamentary language in English and French. When members of French clubs own handbooks of this kind, it makes it easier to conduct meetings entirely in French, as books like this one by Dr. Stewart greatly facilitate the transaction of business in a foreign language.

*L'Ami du Lettré* 1926 (Grasset, 12 frs.) illustrated, is the annual of the Association des Courriéristes littéraires des journaux quotidiens, the literary reporters who are associated with the literary critics of the French press. Three volumes, 1923-5, have previously appeared with the imprint of G. Crès. Each number gives a literary and artistic picture of the year, and many retrospective articles too good to be forgotten in the newspapers.

*Aids to Modern Language Teaching* by Dr. G. C. Bateman (Constable, London, 2/6) is the work of an experienced teacher of French to young pupils. It contains a detailed description of the actual conduct of his lessons under the direct method. I venture to say that every teacher will find suggestions for using the classroom hours to better advantage among Dr. Bateman's *Aids*. Thus, he says that nearly all reading in the early stages should be done after the teacher, and suggests these methods: (a) that the class listen to the teacher; (b) read breath-groups in chorus after the teacher; (c) read breath-groups without the teacher; (d) that individual pupils read a few words after the teacher, or (e) that they read alone. He shows how important it is to dart questions at pupils all over the room, and proposes that pupils also form questions to be answered by the teacher. He suggests sending pupils to the blackboard in pairs, one who needs testing and the other who will probably do correct work. The author focuses his attention upon means for the eradication of habitual mis-

takes. Americans will be interested in the description of the systematic note-book work that is now characteristic of British teaching.

"On n'apprend qu'en s'amusant." *Cause-ries Caran d'Ache* (G. Bell and Sons, London, 3/--) are practical and amusing exercises in French conversation by W. H. Anstie of the Royal Naval College, based on eleven series of genuinely funny drawings by the humorist Poiré, famous under the name of Caran d'Ache for his silhouettes of military life. I can confidently recommend this book for private lessons in conversation. My own favorites are the stories called *Dynamite*, *le Bon Serpent*, and *Snob*. This real novelty among text-books is well bound and well printed. The fact that it comes from the Royal Naval College is proof enough that it will be found stimulating and workable.

The French Academy during January lost a charming novelist in the person of René Boylève (pseud. of R. Tardiveau, b. 1867). Alfred Knopf has republished in this country for classroom use the collection of tales called *La Becquée*. Boylève's short study of war-time renunciation, *Tu n'es plus rien*, had many readers in English translation. Inexpensive reprints are published by Fayard: *La Leçon d'Amour dans un parc*, and *Mademoiselle Cloque*, illus. 2 frs. each; by Calmann-Lévy, illus. 3 frs., *Le meilleur ami*, *Je vous ai désirée un soir*, and at 2 frs. *Le Parfum des îles Borromées*, *La Becquée*, *Sainte-Marie des Fleurs*, and *Le bel Avenir*.

Professor Baldensperger, who was at Berkeley last summer, has given in his *Sensibilité musicale et Romantisme* (Presses françaises, 7 frs.) a pleasing essay on the history of the enjoyment of music by French writers. Starting from a discussion of the impossibility of enjoying music for its own sake in classical times, he shows by interesting quotations how the Revolution affected French society, how the *émigrés* learned a new attitude towards music in Germany, Poland, England and Russia, and states that during the Empire men like Millevoye, Chénedollé, Maurice de Guérin and Quinet began to listen to music without thinking that it was an imitative art. The influence of Pleyel's invention of the *fortepiano*, the meaning of the performances of the *virtuosi* of romantic times, the new rhythms like

those of the *Lied* which appear in French poetry about 1825, these and similar topics are discussed in connection with the principal Romantics from Mme. de Staël to Musset.

*Paris-Théâtre contemporain*, by Professor Louise Delpit (Smith College Library, \$1.50) is a tableau of the French stage in 1924. Prepared during a sabbatical year in France, this study is a kind of chart of the Paris theaters, grouped as "*réguliers*," "*d'avant-garde*" and "*autres scènes à côté*," and in the first part gives an account of the experiments which different managers made recently to meet or direct the public taste. The second part gives information concerning the plays of the authors of the day. Professor Delpit deals separately with those whose reputation has been established by the performance of their work at the *Comédie-française*, and with a larger group of writers who are feeling their way. The author gives the plot of most of the plays which she mentions, so that her work is a guide for readers as well as for players.

*French Life and Ideals*, (Yale University Press, \$2.50) consists of nine chapters translated from the mss. of Professor Albert Feuillerat of Rennes. By a study of the formation of French nationality, the writer produces evidence of racial diversity and social homogeneity to explain why the Frenchman is both simple and complex. He believes that by temperament the French are "the most optimistic people in the world" (p. 26). Their intellectual qualities are the tendency to select and generalize, and their imagination is defended against Brownell and Brander Mathews. In discussing French sentiment, Feuillerat explains the usual French attitude of modest reserve, and gives facts concerning marriage, charity and social service in France. He studies the social instinct, which produces manners and social control, and then shows how the cult of the family develops the individual and social virtues. A chapter on politics and religion is a history of the relations of Church and State in France, explaining the past conflicts, and ending on an optimistic note. In conclusion, he shows that the mission of France makes her a crusader (p. 196) who "never considered human happiness except under the aspect of

universal happiness" (p. 202). The book is a eulogistic contribution to our knowledge of the French.

The Paris thesis of William C. Frierson (Marcel Giard, 20 frs.), *L'Influence du Naturalisme français sur les Romanciers anglais de 1885 à 1900* is a repertory of great interest to people who like to know what the novelists have said about the art of fiction, and who want facts about its development in England. Frierson concludes that the naturalistic novel has led (a) to a new critical attitude towards life, destructive of the prestige of Dickens and Thackeray; (b) to the adoption of a new technique; (c) to the systematic development of themes drawn from life and to the neglect of eccentric characters; (d) to the creation of more individualized and less morally perfect heroes, and (e) to a general tendency to introduce the facts of life into the realm of works of the imagination.

*Les Ecrivains chez eux* by S. Czerefkow (M. Kornefelt, 55 frs.) is an album of caricatures portraying thirty of the younger writers of the day, but not showing them in their own homes. What we want are studies like Lucien Dubech's *Les Chefs de file de la jeune génération*, (Plon, 7 frs. 50); articles that delighted readers of *l'Eclair* concerning the personality and art of Arnoux, Azais, Bainville, Benjamin, Benoît, Béraud, Carco, Cocteau, Copeau, Derème, Dorgelès, Duhamel, Lucien Fabre, Géraudy, Giraudoux, S. Guitry, Massis, Mauriac, Morand, Romans, Maurice Rostand and Thérive. Dubech distributes impartial praise and blame in these chapters full of epigram and anecdote, pins to prick some bubble reputations. This is a book full of information and irresistible quotations: "*Il n'existe plus, en notre temps, que deux écoles poétiques. L'une est l'école unanimiste et elle a pour chef M. Romans. L'autre est l'école fantaisiste, et naturellement, elle n'a pas de chef.*" "*Inutile d'être nécromant pour voir que M. Cocteau ne sera jamais qu'un clair de lune ou que M. Giraudoux est l'écrivain le plus ennuyeux de la langue française. Mais M. Morand? Il est aisé de distinguer d'une part qu'il est malade, d'autre part que sa constitution n'est pas mauvaise.*" "*Comme l'enfer, M. Rostand est pavé de bonnes intentions. Fils d'un glorieux père, il ne se*



*résigne pas à rester inconnu.*" "*M. Thérive pourra paraître aux yeux de la postérité comme le Vaugelas du vingtième siècle.*"

The new *Dictionnaire étymologique français* by Lebrun and Toisoul (F. Nathan, boards. 15 frs.) contains some 4,000 word families, and an explanation of all the derivatives. The compilers hold that words are not understood in their essence when one only knows their ordinary meaning, and that it is their etymology which explains their true significance. But they make little effort to indicate the sources of the French vocabulary, since they quote no Germanic roots, and are unsystematic in their references to Greek and Latin words. Such dictionaries are useful for vocabulary building, and help to give a real feeling for a language.

Miss J. Badaire's *Précis de la littérature française*, (Heath), is only suited for use in secondary schools, since she gives no more than thirteen pages to the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. Fifty pages are devoted to the last seventy-five years of French literature. The book contains composition and conversation exercises and a vocabulary.

It is hard to understand the interest which the French bourgeoisie takes in what are called "*ciné-romans*," film stories illustrated by photographs. *Le Fantôme de l'Opéra* by Gaston Leroux is perhaps the best known story of this class. It is published by Jules Tallendier (3 frs. 50), who has already issued 55 volumes of *ciné romans*. He advertises that his publications always follow

the action of the films, and warns the public to accept no substitutes.

*French Philosophies of the Romantic Period*, by Professor George Boas (John Hopkins Press, \$2.50), is the first book of its kind in English, and welcome for what it tells of Napoleon's attempts to control French thought, for the story of the revolt of Laromiguière and Maine de Biran against the philosophy of passivity, and for the sources of Stendhal's method of introspective analysis, and the rise of a new genre of social satires—the "*physiologies*" (the centenary of Brillat-Savarin's *Physiologie du Goût* has just been observed). While Georg Brandes analyzed the thought of such neo-Christians as Bonald, J. de Maistre, Mme. de Staël and Chateaubriand, Professor Boas has also studied Ballanche and Lamennais, and discussed the revival of religious painting. He tells how the philosophy of Reid, Kant, Schelling and Fichte entered France through Royer-Collard, the eclectic Cousin and his successors Bautain, Damiron and Jouffroy, and then explains the rise of Comte's positivism. The interest of this book for the reader comes from the author's presentation of these philosophies as the outcome of the lives of their makers, and from his emphasis upon their concern with actual problems. Professor Boas has translated practically all his quotations. But I dislike to accept "*given over to the waves of his passions*" (p. 150) for Chateaubriand's "*livré au vague de ses passions*" even though the translation is italicized.

## QUARTERLY GERMAN BOOK-LETTER

FRANZ SCHNEIDER, *University of California*

"**H**UMAN nature does not change, but mankind's point of view does" says the venerable David Starr Jordan. It is this change in point of view, this shift of emphasis which constitutes whatever we may feel justified in acclaiming as human progress and whereupon we may build our hopes for making this world a better place to live in.

The verity of the foregoing assertion is supported by a book which shall be the topic of this "Letter." It is a work in 3 volumes, entitled "*Ein Jahrtausend deutscher Kultur*

—*Quellen von 800—1800*," by Reichmann, Schneider and Hofstaetter. Leipzig 1924-25, published by Klinkhardt (Vol. I, 320 pp; Vol. II, 296 pp; Vol. III, 310 pp.).

As its subtitle indicates, it is not a descriptive history, but a collection of first hand sources covering these thousand years, thus letting the centuries tell their story in their own direct and pithy way. These excerpts have been taken from everywhere: from old law books and ordinances, from public notices and sermons, from chronicles, diaries, autobiographies and other contem-



porary literary productions or collections of such. The Latin, Middle High German, and the Low German texts are given in modern German; the rugged German of the 16th and 17th centuries is provided with foot notes explaining unusual terms and phrases. There are no other comments except that in each case the source of these excerpts has been stated with scholarly punctiliousness.

The book is intended to serve primarily the teacher of "*Deutschkunde*" to whom it furnishes "*Realien*" of a powerful and impressive sort. By its wealth, quality, and compactness, however, it recommends itself to all students of history and human institutions, for these documents reveal as much human ways in general as German characteristics in particular.

Volume I deals with the outer forms of German life throughout these ten centuries, such as the customs accompanying the whole cycle of family life from the cradle to the grave; the housing and living conditions in castle, city, and country; the manner of dress, the attempts on the part of the authorities to regulate it and to enforce observance of class distinctions in this regard; the social usages among the different classes of society and the reputations enjoyed by them in the changing course of time; the wages paid and the cost of victuals; the laws, the courts, and the penalties provided for breaking the laws. I shall cite but two amusing excerpts, taken from the chapter on the care and training of children, p. 11 and pp. 13-14; in both cases progress seems to have been made, and the children of our day may congratulate themselves. The first, written about 1250, reads: "*So macht ihm die Schwester ein Mus und streicht es ihm ein. Aber sein Magen ist klein und sehr bald voll geworden; und pübelt es ihm wieder heraus, so streicht sie es ihm nochmals hinein. So kommt dann die Muhme und tut ihm das gleiche. So kommt dann die Amme und spricht: 'Oh weh, mein Kind ass heute nichts!' Die fängt dann von neuem an und streicht ihm ein. Da weint es, da zappelt es. Also füllt man der Reichen Kinder um die Wette, dass ihrer gar wenige alt werden.*" The second dates from 1800 and reads as follows: "*Besonders verpönt war es im Hause des Grossvaters, unbeschäftigt zu sitzen, und*

*bis zur greisen Grossmutter hinauf. . . . wurde streng darauf gehalten, sich zu beschäftigen; Müssiggang sei aller Laster Anfang. Als einst meine Mutter, noch als kleines Mädchen, nur einige Minuten still sass, rief ihr sofort die Grossmutter zu: 'Aber Mädchen, du tust ja nichts!' Auf ihre Antwort: 'Ich habe nichts zu tun,' antwortete die Grossmutter ärgerlich: 'Ach was! Wenn ein Mädchen nicht weiss, was sie tun soll, schneidet sie sich ein Loch in die Schürze und flickt es wieder zu.'*"

Volume II presents the inner attitude of the individual and of his class toward the conditions of outer existence and lays bare the main springs of subsequent changes in these outer forms, be they arrogant class distinctions or oppressions by prince, patrician, or priest. The evolution of a legal code, the old battle for freedom of speech, press, and teaching, the development of the stage, music, and the plastic arts, in fact the whole course of intellectual unfoldment with its concomitant protests and struggles passes before our eyes and tells its story. The timelessness of human self-satisfaction and prejudice is documented by the following two excerpts. In the first, Erasmus, the humanist, calls the merchant the scum of the earth, a thief and a cheat; in the second, two hundred years later, the "Patriot" of Hamburg naturally considers the merchant the salt of the earth: (p. 49.) "*Die Kaufleute sind die törichtste und schmutzigste Menschenklasse; sie treiben das verächtlichste aller Gewerbe und noch dazu auf die niederträchtigste Weise von der Welt; ob sie schon lügen, falsch schwören, stehlen, betrügen und beständig andere zu beluchsen suchen, so wollen sie doch überall die ersten sein, was ihnen durch ihr Geld gelingt.*" (p. 51) Der Hamburger Patriot: "*Sie (die Kaufleute) sind der Grundpfeiler der gemeinen Wohlfahrt und helfen selbige unter göttlicher Obhut in derjenigen Grösse unterhalten, dazu sie von ihnen selbst mit erhoben wurden.*" The learned doctors of the law get their criticism, too, then as now. In 1520 one jurist writes to another: (p. 68) "*Alle Wissenschaften haben ihr schmutziges Kleid abgelegt, nur die Jurisprudenz ist in ihren Lumpen geblieben.*" And a few years later (1533; loc. cit.) another correspondent says: "*Es wäre absurd, bei den Juristen Bildung zu erwarten. Du weisst*

ja, wie unsere Fachgenossen gleichsam vorsätzlich abgeschmacket sind und nur über ihre Kontroversen schwatzen. Wenn jemand gutes Latein redet, so schreien sie, er sei ein Grammatikus, kein Jurist."

Volume III is entitled "Vom Gottsuchen des deutschen Menschen" (the seeking and searching for God) and has greater unity of content than the other volumes; for that reason, too, it is more exhaustive of its subject. From the earliest religious vows at the end of the 8th century, we are carried onward to ponder with the mystics of the 14th, the 15th, and the 16th century and witness the professions, protests, and struggles of Luther and his group against the Catholic Church with the ensuing bloody counter-reformations and religious persecutions. At the end of the 17th century appear the pietists, such as Spener and Francke and the society of the Herrenhuter, founded by Count Zinzendorf. Almost contemporaneously with the pietistic movement set in the so-called age of enlightenment and reason, typified on German soil by Lessing and Frederick the Great of Prussia. But Lessing who so persistently fought the complacent orthodox pastors also became the apostle of a greater tolerance and a higher sense of morality to which his "Nathan der Weise" is an eloquent witness. Frederick the Great, too, became influential in this direction, for it was he who said: (p. 185) *"Auf dem Felde der geistlichen Religion sind wir alle blind, durch unterschiedliches Wähnen in die Irre geraten. Wer unter uns ist so verwegen, dass er unterscheiden wollte, welcher der rechte Weg sei? Nehmen Sie sich in acht vor dem religiösen Fanatismus, der zu Verfolgungen führt. Wenn armselige Sterbliche dem höchsten Wesen irgend wohlgefallen können, so geschieht es durch Wohltaten, die sie den Menschen erweisen, und nicht durch Gewalttaten, die sie gegen starrköpfige Geister verüben. . ."*

This message of tolerance was reiterated in the years following by Kant, Schiller, Goethe, Fichte, and others, and many pertinent and pregnant passages from their works and letters attest it. In many cases, this message was carried further and onward, for instance by Goethe who says (p. 221),

in a conversation with Eckermann: *"Toleranz sollte eigentlich nur eine vorübergehende Gesinnung sein; sie muss zur Anerkennung führen; dulden heisst beleidigen."* (i. e., tolerance really should be a passing state of mind; it should lead to full recognition: to tolerate is to insult.)

A belief in God having had for many, many centuries a counterweight in a belief in evil powers who would be helpful to man "for a consideration" like Faust's Mephistopheles or who must be exorcised and cast out bodily, it is but natural that the editors of this book saw fit to include in it examples of the hopes and fears entertained by our forbears in this regard and of their wild and tenacious superstitions.

I trust that it has become evident from the foregoing that the selections contained in these three volumes have no particular bias; they are simply an easily accessible and manageable compendium of records bespeaking the fears and follies, faiths and failures, aspirations and achievements of a certain portion of mankind which could be duplicated—scholarship being willing—in regard to many another portion of mankind.

Closely connected in purpose with the book just discussed are two series of booklets. The one is called "Deutschkundliche Bücherei,—Eine Sammlung von Hilfsbüchern zur Vertiefung in die deutsche Sprache, Literatur, Kunst, Kultur," each number costing for the most part only 60 or 80 Pfennigs. The other bears the title: "Deutscher Hort, — Kulturgeschichtliches Lesebuch für die höheren Schulen in Einzelheften. About 55 booklets belong to this series ranging in price from 40-80 Pfennigs each. They are to supplant the former big "Lesebuch" in accordance with the new principle established in German schools. By this means, greater variety and also greater concentration of subject matter is made possible for class reading, besides giving the teacher a fuller play of personal initiative. Both series are published by Quelle & Meyer, Leipzig, and are described in a folder of 32 pages with a score of illustrations; the publishers will be glad, no doubt, to send it to any one for the asking.

## QUARTERLY ITALIAN BOOK LETTER

HERBERT H. VAUGHAN, *University of California, Berkeley*

THE February number of *ITALICA* (the Bulletin of the American Association of Teachers of Italian) contains an interesting article on the status of Italian studies in France by Henri Hauvette, author of the *History of Italian Literature* and Professor of Italian at the Sorbonne. Judging from this article one would say that the work done in Italian at the Sorbonne was about the equivalent of that done at the University of California in Berkeley. Approximately the same number of hours of upper division and graduate work are devoted to the subject in the two institutions. The lower division work in the University of California should not be counted in making this comparison as in France such work is given in the *lycée* and is not included in the university curriculum.

Professor Hauvette states that Italian is offered in the *lycées* and other secondary schools in Paris, Clermont-Ferrand, Saint-Etienne, and Dijon, and in the South of France from Montpellier to Nice, in Ajaccio, Tunis, Constantine, and Algiers. In the West of France Spanish is offered instead of Italian. Both of these Romance languages are elective in the *lycées*, the student having his choice of any two of the four languages, Italian, Spanish, German, and English, in the new courses of study which are designated as those of the "Modern Humanities" as they substitute the study of modern languages for that of Latin and Greek.

Among the universities where Italian is included in the curriculum Professor Hauvette mentions the Sorbonne where he devotes his entire time to this subject and is assisted by Professor Jeanroy of the Department of Romance Philology who lectures one hour a week on Italian; Strassburg, where Professor Maugain occupies the Chair of Italian and is assisted by Professor Kohler of the Spanish Department; Grenoble, where Professors Ronzy and Valentin teach Italian; Aix-Marseille, where Professor Mignon is assisted by one of the professors from the *lycée*. In Bordeaux the instruction in Italian is given by Professor Renaudet of the Department of

Modern History; in Toulouse it is given by Professor Anglade of the Department of Romance Philology. In Lyon, Montpellier, and Clermont-Ferrand it is given by professors from the *lycées*.

Another interesting article is that on the study of Italian Phonetics by C. E. Parmenter of the University of Chicago. The study of Italian phonetics is likely to be neglected because Italian sounds closely resemble sounds which are familiar to us in English and because Italian orthography is so nearly phonetic that the teacher is likely to dismiss the subject, not considering it necessary for the mastery of the language. Nevertheless the habits of pronunciation of the two peoples are very different and the English-speaking student has to change his manner of enunciation entirely if he is to learn to speak Italian correctly.

A third article on the Partitive Construction in Italian by Professor Vaughan of the University of California in Berkeley has already been referred to in a previous number (January) of the *FORUM*.

Professor Ruth Shepard Phelps of the University of Minnesota has published a volume on the "Earlier and Later Forms of Petrarch's *Canzoniere*." This is an interesting study and an excellent piece of work. It is reviewed by Professor Kenneth McKenzie, now of Princeton, in *ITALICA*.

In the February number of *MODERN PHILOLOGY* Professor Ernest H. Wilkins of the University of Chicago published an excellent article on "The Pre-*Chigi* Form of the *Canzoniere* of Petrarch." This is a contribution worthy of the author and shows the profound scholarship and accurate appraisal of evidence which we would expect of him.

Professor O. M. Johnston, of Leland Stanford University, has published in the *PHILOLOGICAL QUARTERLY* (V, 35-43) an "Interpretation of the First Canto of Dante's *Divina Commedia*" which is interesting and convincing. The "dark wood" would represent the *Inferno*, the "sun-lit hill," Purgatory, and the sun itself, Paradise. In view of Dante's fondness for mul-



multiple symbolism this new interpretation is not to be taken as contrary to those already advanced and accepted, but would convey additional meaning to the allegory of the work.

In the ROMANIC REVIEW (XVI, 330-340) Professor J. B. Fletcher of Columbia University has an article on "The Daughter of the Sun, a Study in Dante's Multiple Symbolism." This study shows the many meanings which Dante often intends to convey in a single metaphor.

Professor Olin H. Moore, of Ohio State University, has published a monograph in the publication of that institution on "The Young King, Henry Plantagenet, in History, Literature and Tradition," in which he takes up the question of the reading *giovane* or *Giovanni* in Inf. XXVIII, 135.

Professor H. H. Blanchard, of the College of Wooster, Ohio, has published in the Publications of the Modern Language Association (XI, 828-851) an article on "Spencer and Boiardo." Evidence is given to show that Spencer knew Boiardo and fifteen episodes in the "Faerie Queene" are examined together with parallel passages in Boiardo.

A new monthly magazine called DICTUM is being published in New York by two young men of Italian extraction who believe that there is a place for a publication written entirely in English and devoted to

Italian art and culture. The first number contains a foreword by the editor Alexander Bevilacqua, articles by Messrs. Cautela, Patri, and Cosenza, translations of stories by Ada Negri and Corrado Ricci. Particularly noteworthy is the translation of the Fiesole's *Sepolcri* which is an excellent piece of work by Mary Eleanor Peters of San Mateo, California.

The new revised edition of *Hoare's Italian Dictionary* (Cambridge University Press) has appeared, this edition in many respects being superior to the first. It is by far the best and most complete Italian-English Dictionary on the market.

Giuseppe de Robertis has published with Le Monnier in Florence an anthology of eighteenth and nineteenth century Italian lyrics under the name of *Poeti Lirici dei Secoli XVIII-XIX*. This should be a most useful book.

Several new plays have appeared in Italy, among them *La Scala*, by Rosso di San Secondo and *La Sera del Trenta* by Fausto Maria Martini. Mario Ferrigni has written a play *Santo Francesco* which is a series of episodes dealing with the life of the saint rather than a legitimate drama. As this year marks the seventh centenary of the death of St. Francis such a play is timely.

Pirandello is reported to be at work on four plays, *Diona e la Tuda*, *La Nuova Colonia*, *L'Amico delle Mogli*, and *La Moglie di Prima*.

## QUARTERLY SPANISH BOOK-LETTER

CESAR BARJA, *University of California, Southern Branch*

JOSE VASCONCELOS is one of the most distinguished figures of contemporary Mexico. Director of Mexico's National University at one time, Minister of Public Instruction at another, he deserves still more consideration as a preacher of the ideal, as a poet. For this is what Señor Vasconcelos is at heart, a real poet, a poet of the ideal, a romantic lover of beauty.

*La Raza Cósmica (Misión de la Raza Iberoamericana)*, Agencia Mundial de Librería, Madrid, Vasconcelos' recent book, is also the work of a poet. It is, at all events, a most interesting book carrying a most interesting message. *Leit-motif* of the book

is the conflict between "Latinism" and "Saxonism." In former days this conflict had the old world for its stage; but to-day the conflict has been transferred to the stage of the New World. Now, what does "Saxonism" stand for? It stands, according to Vasconcelos, for the affirmation of a race—the white Saxon race—through the submission and destruction of the other races. This, Vasconcelos says, is what "Saxonism" actually did with the native races of America. "Latinism," on the contrary, did not destroy these native American races, but rather, assimilated them, mixed with them, thus giving birth to a new race, a race which, as distinguished from all



other races, has as its main characteristic that of being a composite race. Briefly, then, "Saxonism" stands for struggle, force, egoism; "Latinism" for adaptation, tolerance, love. So much for the *leit-motif* of the book. Now for its message.

Races have come and races have gone. At the present hour the white man is the ruler of the world. "Saxonism" fights for the survival and predominance of the white man. This fight, however, will avail nothing in the end; the white man will also have his day of doom. And now here is the message: When this day of doom comes, that composite race now growing up on Spanish American soil will take the place of all vanished races. And this composite race, this synthetical race, will be the final race, "the cosmic race." "On the soil of America," thus the author concludes, "the dispersion of races will have an end; there the unity of all peoples will be consummated by the triumph of love."

Vasconcelos' message of a cosmic race may be only a dream—a fanciful dream perhaps—but a dream with a meaning. Unfortunately, a sad meaning. We have heard much these latter years concerning a better understanding between North and South America. Yet, when we come to consider the spiritual side of this understanding, it seems as if the gap between the two continents were as wide today as it was twenty or thirty years ago. Much to our surprise we find that Vasconcelos' spiritual attitude towards the United States is not unlike that voiced by Rodó in his *Ariel*. And this is not the only instance, for the same spiritual attitude is revealed in the books of several of the most conspicuous Spanish American writers of today. It is earnestly to be hoped that a continued interchange of ideas between the two continents will finally end in doing away with much of this suspicion and ill feeling. Here teachers of Spanish have a real task before them, a task to the accomplishment of which Shakespeare's words might well apply: "Here's much to do with hate, but more with love."

Merely by the title of his new book, *La otra América*, Madrid, 1925, Armando Donoso, the well known Chilean writer, calls our attention to another aspect of Spanish-American life. For that title suggests

that there are in the one geographical and racial Spanish-America of to-day two morally and spiritually opposed Americas. There is, in fact, something like a traditional America, although of recent formation, an America whose main achievement has been imitation and whose main virtue is vulgarity. A Europe-like America, reproducing all the evils of old and sick Europe. Against this traditional America, "infested with literature, consumptive from imitation, without roots in its race nor in its soil"—to use the author's own words—, a new America conscious of its destinies is trying to affirm a personality of its own, a fully spiritual personality. A few representatives of this America of the reaction is what the author studies in the several essays of his book. Some of these essays will be of particular interest to teachers of Spanish-American literature, like the two on the Chilean novelist Eduardo Barrios and the Chilean poetess Gabriela Mistral.

Ramiro de Maeztu, the brilliant Spanish newspaper writer, has collected in book-form several essays on *Don Quijote*, *Don Juan y la Celestina*, Madrid, 1926. Señor Maeztu is at the moment much worried with certain social and religious problems and, we fear, he has also put into these essays a little too much Sociology and rather too much Religion. For the rest, the essays are very interesting and, even if the author be not always right, he is, at least, ever suggestive.

And speaking of Don Quixote: Is or is not the Manchegan Hidalgo a madman? According to Waldo Frank he is "a man possessed—possessed of an Ideal—, but not a madman." This and other questions are discussed at length in the author's article on *Don Quixote: A Modern Scripture*, in *The Virginia Quarterly Review*, January, 1926.

Azorín does not write novels. The author of *Castilla*, *Los pueblos* and so many other delightful books, is a realist and, as a realist, he does not believe in such things as plots in actual life. *Doña Inés*, Madrid, 1925, Azorín's last book, in spite of the story of love told, interests us more as an impressionistic picture of life and life emotions than as a real novel. Of course, the word *life* has a particular meaning when speaking of Azorín's books. Rather than

life as we generally understand it—action, movement, passion—, in Azorín's books we have the spiritual perfume of life, that which remains of life once life is gone. But what an exquisite spiritual perfume of life—and death—Azorín has drawn out this time of the old city of Segovia, the scene of *Doña Inés* story of love!

*Santa Rogelia*, Madrid, 1926, by Armando Palacio Valdés, is, in part at least, a religious novel. But as is the case in the author's *Marta y María*, religion is here combined with humanity, so much and in such a way that, when the novel ends, the humanity of the author impresses the reader more, perhaps, than the religion of the heroine. Feminine characters are generally the best in Palacio Valdés' novels, and this is also the case in *Santa Rogelia*.

As in the other volumes of the collection *Los Grandes Escritores*, Agencia Mundial de Librería, Madrid, we have in the one now devoted to Benavente—*Jacinto Benavente*, by Angel Lázaro, 1925—a sympathetic presentation of the life and work of the greatest living Spanish dramatist.

One hundred poems from the best modern Spanish and Spanish American poets have been published in a small volume: *Las cien mejores poesías (líricas) modernas*, Editorial Mundo Latino, Madrid, 1925. As stated in the *advertencia preliminar*, this is a continuation of Menéndez y Pelayo's *Las cien mejores poesías (líricas) de la lengua castellana*. Just about where Menéndez y Pelayo's collection leaves off, the new collection begins.

For a closer acquaintance with some of the more recent developments in the field of lyrical poetry, in Spain as well as in other European countries, the new book by Guillermo de Torres, *Literaturas europeas de vanguardia*, Madrid, 1925, can be read with profit. It is a fashionable book upon a fashionable subject, full of excellent and curious information. Ultraism, Creationism, Cubism, Dadaism and Futurism are the five principal movements of the last few years treated by the author. Unfortunately, the book suffers from the absence of really critical appreciation and from the extravagant vocabulary used at times.

Under the title *A través del Diccionario de la Lengua Española*, Madrid, 1925, Gabriel María Vergara has collected in a small

volume *cuatro mil palabras y algunas más, de uso frecuente, no incluidas en el Diccionario de la Real Academia Española (décima quinta edición), o que lo están en otras acepciones o como anticuadas*. Not a few of the "cuatro mil palabras" are of almost daily use, several of them, like "detective," "revancha," "malabarista," "cablegrafiar" and others, have already been included in some of the most popular dictionaries, and it seems only natural that the Real Academia should have added them to the twelve thousand, more or less, additional words accepted in the fifteenth edition of its *Diccionario*. To say that several of these words are Anglicisms, Gallicisms, etc., would scarcely be a good reason for not accepting them, for if "detective" is an Anglicism, what about "bistec" and "mitin"?

Professor E. C. Anibal is preparing to do justice to Mira de Amescua's dramatic genius by editing from hitherto unpublished manuscripts a series of critical texts of *comedias* and *autos* of this all too little known classical dramatist. *El Arpa de David* (The Ohio State University, University Studies, Contributions in Languages and Literatures, Number 2, 1925) has been Mira de Amescua's *comedia* chosen by Professor Anibal for the first of his critical texts. The edition of the play with its excellent introduction and notes is a very scholarly work to be read with profit by every hispanist.

Calderón's *La Vida es Sueño* has recently been translated into English prose for the English stage, by Frank Birch and J. B. Trend—*Life's a Dream*, Cambridge, 1925. Occasionally, when it seems essential for scenic effect, the verse rhythm has been preserved, as, for instance, in the famous *décimas* at the end of Act II. Most convenient suggestions for the staging of the drama are given in the Preface to the translation.

Professor S. Griswold Morley's public lecture on *Spanish Ballad Problems*, now published in the *University of California Publications in Modern Philology*, vol. 13, No. 2, will be read with the greatest interest. After all that has been written, the question of the origin of the Spanish epics, of the long as well as of the short epics, is still far from having received a satisfactory answer. Professor Morley him-

self, who has gone deeply into the subject, is today as skeptical about the Germanic origin of the long epics as about the prevalent theory that the short epics, or *romances*, are fragments of the longer poems. No doubt, Professor Morley would welcome for the Spanish epic some kind of test like that applied by Bédier to the French epic. And he would also welcome an investigation into the relations of medieval Latin epic poetry to the Romance epic.

Teachers of Spanish will like to read the

article *Spanish Studies in the United States*, contributed to the *Bulletin of Spanish Studies*, Liverpool, England, by Professor Henry Grattan Doyle, now reprinted in the *Bulletin of the Pan American Union*, March, 1926. In only ten pages Professor Doyle reviews the history of the teaching of the Spanish language and literature in the United States and offers us a picture—somewhat overcharged with the coloring of adjectives, nouns and names—of its actual development.



## CORRESPONDENCE and COMMUNICATIONS



### A Barbarian Wanders Through the Field of Education

ALL the problems concerning the teaching of modern languages are now being solved by the engineering skill of the educational experts. Scientific tests are offered to gauge accurately the capacity of the student for ingurgitating so many rules, for disgorging so many words, for placing so many square pegs in so many round holes. Elaborate methods are devised by means of which the teacher can discover that the pupils divide themselves into three classes: the dull, the mediocre, and the intelligent. Great indignation is voiced over the discrepancies in the marking of examination papers, the same paper being sometimes graded from fifty to one hundred percent by different teachers. Some inventive genius in the schools of Education will no doubt take up the latter problem and devise a machine that will do away with every possible danger of human error.

Unfortunately, some teachers, too many perhaps, have still left in them irradicable traces of that old fashioned and despicable genus, the human individual. But the research laboratories and the schools of pedagogy, with their indefatigable efforts, will soon succeed in destroying the last vestiges of the human factor. Then the modern miracle will be accomplished; the teacher reduced to a mechanical function, under the directing hand of a skilled mechanic, will be able to turn out standardized products in every branch of instruction. The pupils will be automatically classified, scorified, stultified, and shipped C. O. D. to their final destination. All waste will be eliminated. Efficiency, accuracy, speed and maximum output will be obtained in all factories of learning.

The writer of these flippant remarks does not pretend to know everything about psychology, pedagogy, methods of teaching, or other

patent medicines prescribed by educational efficiency engineers. Consequently he may be allowed to wander freely through those highly organized regions of learning as a barbarian whose remarks and utterances offer more mirth than serious offense. Venturing with bold steps over these cultivated grounds, as an interested but naïve stranger, I see in the field of education, and to be more to the point, in the field of modern languages, two elements worthy of consideration. The first is the development of the teacher as an individual instead of a device for dispensing formulae; the second, is the recognition of the pupil himself as an individual, instead of a classified lump of raw material.

I often ask this question of students who come to me for a teacher's recommendation:

"Why do you want to teach French?"

The answers are often as follows:

"Because I have to teach something to make a living, and French seems to me the easiest thing to teach."

I cannot help noticing also that these candidates are young women. In our lower division classes a large number of young men appear in the class room, but once they have fulfilled their language requirements, they usually disappear and seek more worthy pursuits. A young woman has to choose between stenography, French, and marriage.

Two years ago in a course of French poetry I noticed a particularly talented young woman student. Her critical judgment, her aesthetic taste and literary aptitudes distinguished her from all other students. I remarked to her one day:

"I suppose that you are going to teach French, and I shall be glad to recommend you for a position."

Her answer to my remark was:

"I am not going to teach French or anything else. I am going to sell hats in a department store. I can sell hats without knowing anything about them, but how do you



expect me to teach French without a thorough preparation in that subject? Such preparation I cannot get in this country. As for going abroad, it is out of the question. Since I must have a job, I'll start selling hats the day after I graduate."

Although we need not expect such heroic attitude from all our students, the latter are fully aware of their deficiencies as regards their teaching equipment. Their main concern however is about their imperfect knowledge of the language. About its cultural value they are perfectly at peace with their conscience, being largely ignorant of that phase of their education.

To get teachers especially prepared for their work is the fundamental problem. Students with a smattering of French, but surprisingly ignorant of the thoughts, the history, the institutions, the culture of France, are sent out by the hundreds every year to teach its language. All they can do—and with their limitations, it is a wonder that they do it so well—is to teach a few words and many grammatical rules, mechanically according to a text book.

If the teaching of a foreign language reduces itself to making thousands of pupils learn the foreign words for "chair," "dog," or "cheese," or how to say "How do you do?" in French or in Chinese, it may be just as well to scrap all this expensive branch from the curriculum, and substitute, let us say, automobile repairing, which at least might afford a much more interesting and useful instruction.

If, on the other hand, we believe in the cultural objective of a foreign language, if we consider the acquisition of a new tongue merely as a key to the knowledge, art, literature, and general accomplishments of another race or country, then the study is worth the price and the trouble. Is there any other branch of learning which affords such an elevating ideal of culture, that so broadens the mind and brings the pupil into contact with a larger humanity, that is more conducive to peaceful relations and tolerant attitude among people of distant countries?

But in order to pursue such an aim, the instructor must be prepared with that end in view. Anybody can use a textbook according to a prescribed method—a method which varies from year to year in accordance with the latest fad. Anybody can find means to grade papers with mathematical accuracy, if the effort were worth the trouble. But where are the teachers with a sufficient cultural background to impart knowledge to their pupils, to inspire an ideal, to stimulate interest, to develop the mind, to form the taste, to satisfy the natural craving of youth for knowledge, to fulfill his aspirations for the beautiful, the good, and the true?

The study of Greek and Latin has been discarded, not because the pupils of today are not interested in those subjects, but because the teachers found nothing to show them but the rusted mechanism of these classic tongues. The treasures of Athens were hidden from

their gaze, the grandeur of Rome was shut from their minds, while they labored for three or four years over the gerund or the declensions. A similar fate will of necessity befall the modern languages unless they are taught as educational tools and not as an aim in themselves. Of the thousands of American pupils taking instruction in French for two or more years, ninety percent will never read a French book in the original after leaving school, ninety-nine percent will never hear a word of spoken French for the rest of their lives. The claim that such instruction is good mental gymnastics is sheer fallacy. The solution of cross-word puzzles or the reading of ciphered messages would serve the same purpose.

The survival or the downfall of modern language studies depends not on the pupil, not on the board of education, but on the teacher. Let the teacher realize the high cultural purpose of his subject, so that its value be considered second to no other branch of instruction, but rather esteemed as a matter of vital importance to a good education. But in order to realize this ideal, it is evident that the teacher has first to be educated, that he must first acquire that wide cultural background, which will serve as the foundation for his teaching. But how can the candidate acquire this basic culture?

Let us consider the situation of the woman candidate for a teacher's certificate. The student after spending four years studying uncorrelated subjects, from fancy dancing to short-story writing, decides to teach French as a means of earning a livelihood. Of course she has meanwhile acquired a smattering of the language, which she has selected as a major subject. She has also taken courses in French literature with more or less intellectual profit. Then, as a special and immediate preparation for teaching French, the candidate comes for an extra year to the university. That year, which should be devoted to an intensive training in language and general culture, is wasted in extraneous and futile studies. The candidate has to take required courses in pedagogy, psychology, teaching methods, educational laws and other irrelevant matter. And that is called Education! With such or similar instruction, she gets a teacher's certificate and goes forth fully (?) equipped to teach French!

Of France, of her history, arts, political and social institutions, of her contribution to the general culture of mankind, the candidate knows distressingly little. She does not even suspect that throughout medieval times France was the cradle of European civilization, that her literature and architecture were the foci of all other nations, not to mention later periods of equal importance. Has she seen, even in pictures, a Gothic cathedral of France? Has she ever been told that Gothic art, Gothic architecture, which is one of the highest spiritual achievements of mankind, originated in France, is a product of the French mind, is a manifestation of the spirit of logic, reason and enthusiasm which characterizes that race?



If the name of Descartes is not totally unknown to her, does she even suspect that all our present modes of thinking, and practically all the course of scientific achievements result from his *Discours de la Méthode*? Should you ask her about the geographical area of France, she may be able to repeat the stock phrase that the whole country could be dumped into the state of Texas, with plenty of room to spare. Has she ever been told that the colonial possessions of France in Africa form the largest tributary conquests since the days of the Roman Empire?

Most of these candidates have not even seen the face of a French postal stamp, let alone do they know the fact that the universal postal system was founded by Richelieu. I suppose that they will have occasion to dress up their pupils in some quaint Brittany or Normandy costume, and feel proud of their ability to give a real touch of France. But will they ever tell these children that most of the fairy tales that have charmed their childhood, all the Mother Goose stories from little Red Riding Hood to the Three Wishes took form in France, were in fact written by one of the most distinguished writers of the seventeenth century, to be reproduced and imitated in every country of Europe?

But once more we ask: How, when, and where can the teaching candidate acquire that broad cultural preparation? Scarcely one in a hundred can afford to go abroad and get even a glimpse of that country, whose language it will be her business to teach. A trip to France, however short, if well organized, would be worth years of college instruction. Half of the money spent for Schools of Education could be more profitably invested in sending abroad the most desirable candidates, in founding traveling fellowships, in organizing exchanges of foreign students and teachers. Still the great majority could not benefit by such Utopian advantages. What is perhaps more feasible is to bring France to them, to put the candidates, during at least one year, in a thoroughly French atmosphere, where all their efforts will be concentrated on the language, the thought, the culture of the French people.

The situation, as we face it now, is paradoxical. Our post-graduate work must conform to research, to the study of special problems, to the training of scholars. Yet, with few exceptions, most of our graduate students in the Departments of French are candidates for the teaching of French. In other words, we are supposed to fulfill the function of a Normal School or a Teachers College while pursuing a strictly academic aim. Besides, should we even try to give our candidates a more special training, their attention is being engaged by innumerable and non-descript courses under the pretext of Education.

As an immediate step toward saving the modern language situation one may suggest the creation of a training school, especially fitted, especially equipped for the purpose. This should be a state institution, or part of a state institution including other branches of

study. Candidates would enter only through competitive examinations, the successful ones receiving free tuition. A period of two years of intense training, after graduation from college, would be required from these students. The state would obligate itself, when the candidates had successfully completed the term of their study, and passed a comprehensive examination to give them a position. I venture to say that men of ability would be attracted to teach even French, if only they were thus assured of a dignified means of making a livelihood.

There is nothing original, nothing startling in the above suggestion. Special training schools with similar purpose and similar functions have long been in existence in various countries. Such schools will undoubtedly some day be established in California, the moment it is realized that the formation of the teacher as a cultured individual is the first requirement for successful teaching. All the other problems relating to modern languages appear secondary, and would for the most part vanish, once we find a means fully to educate the teacher in his specialty. We might then witness the realization of an ideal, despised by Schools of Education, yet cherished by some old fashioned professors: the development of the pupil as a thinking and reasoning individual.

MATHURIN DONDO

University of California.

### A Test Experiment

During the past November the Modern Language Department at Polytechnic High School of Los Angeles tried to make a study of the learning curve as shown in free composition at regular intervals both in French and in Spanish. This was suggested by problem 85 of the Modern Foreign Language Study List.

The problem as set, at first, was to cover a period of eight weeks. The pupils were to write for five minutes at intervals of one week on some topic that might be well within their power. The points to be noted were the number of words written in the allotted time, the number of mistakes in idiomatic expression in grammar, and the number of misspelled words. It was also felt that some evaluation should be made of the quality of the composition.

The study was, for various reasons, discontinued at the end of four weeks.

The following figures obtained at the end of the first and fourth weeks may serve to illustrate the results obtained.

Both in French and in Spanish the same classes were tested each week.

First week:

69 pupils B9 FRENCH.

Dispersion in number of words written, 21 to 111.

51 average number of words.

2½-3 average number of mistakes in grammar.

2½-3 average number of mistakes in spelling.

Fourth week:

42 pupils (fewer pupils on account of an "Aud." call.)

Dispersion in number of words written,  
16-129.

56 average number of words.

2½ average number of mistakes in grammar.

2½ average number of mistakes in spelling.

First week:

134 pupils, B9 SPANISH.

Dispersion in number of words written,  
8-71.

33½ average number of words.

2½-3 average number of mistakes in grammar.

2½-3 average number of mistakes in spelling.

Fourth week:

105 pupils.

Dispersion in number of words written,  
16-101.

43½ average number of words.

2½ average number of mistakes in grammar.

2½ average number of mistakes in spelling.

In both French and Spanish there is apparent increase in fluency in writing with diminution in the number of mistakes in grammar and in spelling.

It will be noticed that the average number of words written by the students of French is greater than the number in Spanish. The former studied a grammar and a reader; the latter were confined to the use of a grammar. Might this not indicate that if fluency in writing is an objective, the reading of interesting narrative is desirable?

The large dispersion in the number of words may be accounted for in part by the fact that pupils may begin the study of a foreign language any semester during the high school course. This makes considerable diversity in age and in previous training. Moreover, no one is refused the opportunity of studying a language who wishes to do so.

The actual time of writing was limited to five minutes; but considerably more time was consumed in necessary details, thus interfering with the regular work. The interval of one week was felt to be too short. The necessity was felt of offering assigned topics so that the exercise might not degenerate into foolish repetition, and in order that it might serve as a measure of recent class work. This choice of subject tended, at times, to retard one pupil more than another.

Such suggestions as the following were given: Write sentences about things in the class-room. Write a conversation using greetings, etc., suitable when meeting a friend. Write a résumé of the reading lessons of the previous week.

We undertook to make the tests with too large a number of pupils. The result was that the checking of papers became burdensome for the teachers. They felt it did not give commensurate returns for the effort required.

While it was possible to count the words, and check the mistakes, we had no standard measure for judging composition values. Such measures are being made, I understand, under the direction of the Study.

Los Angeles

Alice Hindson,  
Polytechnic High School

## A Common Misconception Refuted

As a teacher in both day and evening high schools in Los Angeles, I have found widely prevalent the usual misconception of the Spanish tongue, namely, that Mexican, or the Spanish tongue of the New World, and Spanish of Spain are two widely dissimilar languages. As a bi-lingual Spanish-American I would like to deny this allegation and to inflict my "first-hand" convictions, if I may be permitted to do this, upon that group which still holds this unwarranted opinion.

People who are unable to speak Spanish clearly enough to be readily understood by the Mexican in our community consequently assume that there is a real difference in languages. If the Spanish of Spain is correctly pronounced, however, the Spanish-American can immediately comprehend all of the conversation and there is no language barrier. It is true that the Old and the New World pronunciations differ regionally in respect to the "c" before the vowels "e" and "i," the "z," the "rr," the "ll" and in a few slurred syllables, such as the "d" in "ado" endings, but in general the languages are no more dissimilar phonetically than the English of Britain and American English. The differences are mainly phonetic, with the great mass of vocabulary identical, whereas in the English variations there seems no rule to guide one in pronunciation such as there is in Spanish. As an example, witness the English names of Gloucester, Worcestershire and others and try to find adequate rules of pronunciation. In Spanish this regional swallowing of syllables is taboo, both here and in "vieja España."

One reason for alleged differences is the choice of synonyms. The New World Spaniard, having derived his language heritage at the epoch of the conquest, would naturally tend to use a vocabulary of older Spanish and many times the so-called variations in speech are directly traceable to this fact. Witness the corrupted "asina" for "ainsi" in place of the modern "asi," as an example. In cases where several synonyms exist, the Spanish-American is found using one that may be unusual in Spain, but linguistically correct.

Speed in talking and differences in intonation also cause lack of understanding, though the same question comes up in English differences more prominently than in Spanish. Personally I cannot understand a Highlander from Scotland nearly as well as I can a native of Galicia, nor a native of York any better than I can a "Sevillano," though I have received a college education and am of average intelligence. We are all agreed that in the Castilian pronunciation are found most of the linguistic dissimilarities, whereas in all the other provinces of Spain the language is almost identical with all the New-World Spanish. Why, then, quibble over the affair? With education, differences disappear and it is only by reason or ignorance without personal investigation that we can make the assertion that Spanish-Spanish is not Mexican-Spanish.

Los Angeles

Alonzo B. Forbush,  
Garfield High School

## The Modern Foreign Language Study

Since the Chicago meeting in January of this year, the Committee on Investigation has been engaged in pushing forward two phases of the STUDY: The statistical researches and the administration of the American Council tests.

**STATISTICAL RESEARCHES AND STUDIES.** With the efficient and self-sacrificing help of the Regional Chairmen and their committees a last round-up is now in progress of the schools still in default of the High School Questionnaire. At the same time the Bureau of Education is sending out questionnaires to approximately fifteen hundred new schools not listed last year. An experimental tabulation has already begun in Washington—through a private firm—of the returns from the H. S. Q. 2. In order to test out in advance the method and cost of this great undertaking this experiment will be carried through for one State, Massachusetts, for which the returns approach one hundred per cent, and on the basis of the results plans will be made for the complete tabulation of the statistical material.

Through the Regional Committees a considerable number of college registrars have added their reports to those already in hand. The editing of this material for tabulation began March 1st.

The forwarding of names to the Bureau of Education for the Post-Scholastic Questionnaire goes on rapidly. To February 24th questionnaires had been sent to 2,915 graduates of colleges and 4,463 graduates of secondary schools.

The heavy demands on the time of the New York office have delayed the printing and distribution of the questionnaire to a selected list of teachers. To this date a list of approximately three thousand has been asked to cooperate in filling in the desired information, and of those who have so far responded, 90% will undertake this task or find responsible substitutes. It is expected that the questionnaires will be distributed by the end of the first week in March and that the returns will be in hand by April 1st.

**ADMINISTRATION OF AMERICAN COUNCIL TESTS.** The administration of the tests for norms and such other results as may be expected from widely distributed administration is now in progress. On account of delays in printing and distribution it was not found possible to make this administration in most cases before the end of the half-session just closed. But approximately equivalent results can be obtained by giving the tests to students immediately after the beginning of the present half-session.

For German, Form A test (both parts) was given to approximately 3,500 students in schools and colleges in New York and Wisconsin, and the results are being studied at the University of Wisconsin. For French and Spanish, from 4,000 to 5,000 students will be tested in each of the languages including groups distributed throughout the country. The results will be scored and studied statistically at the University of Chicago for French and at the University of Pennsylvania for Spanish. By March 15th it is hoped that the analysis of the results

will have proceeded to a point where the Committee on Investigation, together with the Canadian Committee, can have full and enlightening information respecting this first general use of the American Council Tests, and will be able to reconsider intensively the techniques and forms used and study the norms of achievement derived.

Professor Buchanan and Professor Goggio, of the University of Toronto, have completed in preliminary form for standardization Italian Vocabulary, Grammar, and Silent Reading Tests.

The Committee is proceeding as time permits, in co-operation with various scholars, in developing additional forms of grammar and reading tests.

**SPECIAL STUDIES IN CURRICULUM AND METHOD.** Reports of marked progress have been received from a number of special researches now going on. Among these may be mentioned:

The organization of a check list for the study of Spanish Syntax Frequencies and of Spanish Idiom Frequencies, and the working out of similar lists for French Syntax and Idiom Frequencies.

The study of technical courses in the colleges and universities in reading scientific material in the modern foreign languages.

The study of reading requirements in the modern foreign languages of candidates for the higher degrees.

The study of the influence of the learning of French on the knowledge of English vocabulary.

For the present semester, by an arrangement with the Trustees of the University of Wisconsin, Professor Henmon is devoting all of his time to the purposes of the STUDY, aside from certain indispensable administrative duties at Madison.

ROBERT HERNDON FIFE, Chairman,  
Committee on Direction and Control.  
*Columbia University,  
New York City.*

## A Letter to Friends of Mexico

Dear Fellow-student:

Are you interested in establishing a Scholarship Loan Fund in the United States for Mexicans?

The raising of such a fund was begun by the American students of the 1925 summer session as an expression of their sincere interest in the welfare of Mexico, and was based upon a pledge of \$100 made by a gentleman in the Library of Congress as an expression of appreciation for courtesies shown him by Señor Daniel Cosío Villegas, while in Mexico gathering materials for the Library.

The purpose of the fund is to aid deserving Mexicans who wish to study at the universities of the United States.

The management of the fund is to be placed in the hands of the Mexican Society of the United States and it is intended that it shall be disbursed this year to Señor Daniel Cosío Villegas, who is studying at Harvard. Thus far about \$250 has been raised and about \$50 in



pledges is still to come in. Subscriptions range from \$1.00 to \$25. It will be stipulated that the money be returned by the borrower within a specified time to be thus made available by others. It is the hope of the 1925 summer school students that all future generations of summer session students will add to this fund that it may become an increasingly permanent evidence of our good will toward Mexico.

Contributions should be sent to Dr. Mary W. Williams, Department of History, Goucher College, Baltimore, Maryland, or to the writer at the address given below.

Trusting that we may see a substantial amount in the treasury of this fund before many months for immediate use, I am,

Sincerely yours,

S. M. CNOSSEN,

Teacher of Spanish,  
Highland Park High School.

Detroit, Michigan,  
March, 1925.

### ¡Al Corriente!

Every week the A9 Spanish class of Roosevelt High School busily looks through newspapers and magazines to find a current event, or an article about Spain or Mexico. When something interesting is found, it is pasted in a little notebook and a comment is written about it in Spanish. The notebooks are handed in and graded every Friday by our teacher, Señorita Manuela O. de Arrigónie.

The students are asked to do this because in this way their interest in Spain and Mexico is stimulated. They look for articles about these countries and thus their powers of observation are developed and they become more alert and wide-awake. The short comment in Spanish which is written in connection with the article is valuable because it helps the pupils to familiarize themselves with the practical possibilities of the Spanish language. This comment helps the students to acquire a larger vocabulary and also to have practice in using their knowledge of Spanish.

MADELINE GRIMSHAW,  
A9 Spanish

Roosevelt High School,  
Los Angeles.

**DON QUIXOTE STATUE TO BE ERECTED IN SPAIN.** The fames and fortunes of Don Quixote de la Mancha, Knight, hero of Cervantes' masterpiece, are to be perpetuated in a giant monument to be built on the plains of El Toboso, birthplace of his beloved Dulcinea. The mayor of Toledo, Spain, heads a committee of leading Cervantes scholars, who will collect the necessary funds, estimated to be 40,000,000 pesetas, or about \$6,000,000. The plans call for a giant statue of Don Quixote, astride his steed Rosinante, and Sancho Panza, his squire. The monument will be twenty times life size, to symbolize the twenty Spanish-speaking countries of the world. The memorial will be completed in about seven years.

**IN THE OFFING.** It will please all modern language teachers to know that steps are being taken in the central and northern parts of the State to form an organization corresponding to the M. L. A. of Southern California. The formation of a strong state federation of the modern foreign language forces cannot but be a potent factor in our educational system. Southern Californians will give such a movement every support and will wish their colleagues in other parts of the state every success. Already the hand of fellowship is extended. May the day of active affiliation and the closest co-operation soon be announced!

**MANY FOREIGNERS AT GERMAN UNIVERSITIES.** The number of foreign students at Prussian universities this semester has again reached pre-war figures. There has been a noticeable falling off, however, in Americans. Of an enrollment of 31,386 in Prussian universities, 2113 are foreigners; Bulgarians, leading with 246, Russians coming second with 191, Norwegians third with 108 and Chinese fourth with 101. The United States used to occupy fourth place, but is now tenth among nations.

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### Salut Printemps, Belle Nature!

O! reviens doux printemps, ranimer la nature!  
Reverdîr les coteaux et les prés et les bois,  
Egayer les vallons de fleurs et de verdure,  
Où les frais boutons d'or s'ouvriront à la fois!

Déjà mars disparaît avec ses giboulées,  
Voici l'avril malin qui sourit radieux;  
Le soleil fait briller mille fleurs étoilées,  
Que l'aquilon effeuille, enlève jusqu'aux cieux.

Dès l'aube, l'on entend un charmant gazouillis;  
Tous les petits oiseaux jasant en harmonie,  
Partout, dans les bosquets, les buissons, les  
taillis,  
Ils louent tous le Seigneur, chantant leur  
litanie.

Tout s'éveille, tout vit et l'insecte s'agite;  
Le bouton est éclos, le lys s'élançe, fier,  
La tulipe au teint vif, éblouit et s'abrite,  
Puis voici la jacinthe et la rose d'hier.

Bientôt le beau lilas aux suaves odeurs,  
Embaumera les airs de son parfum grisant;  
L'aubépine de mal resplendira de fleurs,  
Ainsi que le muguet, si fin, si ravissant.

O Nature, salut! ô toi, source éternelle!  
Et tes bois et tes champs du sage sont compris;  
Là, s'étanche la soif, là, se lave toute alle,  
Par elle sont instruits tous les plus grands  
esprits.

Et le souffle céleste épars dans tout beau lieu,  
Remplit l'homme de fol, de plété, d'extase,  
Quand un hymne d'amour qui monte jusqu' à  
Dieu,  
S'échappe de son coeur comme l'encens d'un  
vase.

LOUISE DELORME NEVBAUMONT.

Manual Arts High School,  
Los Angeles.



## ASSOCIATION ACTIVITIES



The Annual Spring Meeting of the Association will be held on Saturday, April 24th, 1926, at the Hollywood High School, 1521 Highland Avenue, Los Angeles.

Take red car marked "Hollywood," going north on Hill Street; get off at Highland Avenue and walk south two blocks. By auto: Take Sunset Boulevard to Highland Avenue.

### 9:30 A. M.—GERMAN SECTION

1. Vortrag: "Schulreform in der Deutschen Republik," Mr. C. B. Schomaker, University of California, Southern Branch.
2. Report of Standing Committee on Texts and Vocabulary, Mr. Valentin Buehner, Manual Arts High School, Los Angeles.
3. Election of Officers. Reports of Committees.

### 10:30 A. M.—FRENCH SECTION

1. Discours: "Guy de Maupassant, sa vie et ses oeuvres," Professor M. J. Biencourt, University of California, Southern Branch.
2. Election of Officers.

### 11:30 A. M.—SPANISH SECTION (Los Angeles Chapter, A. A. T. S.)

1. Discurso: "La Argentina," Señorita Esperanza Carrillo, Hollywood High School.
2. Música: "Chant polonais," Chopin-Lizst. "Sixth Rhapsodie," .....Lizst. Señorita Nita Cook, Pianista, Hollywood.
3. Election of Officers.

12:30 P. M.—LUNCHEON (at High School Cafeteria, \$1.00 per cover). Reservations must be made by Wednesday, April 21st.

### 1:30 P. M.—GENERAL JOINT SESSION

1. Address: "Wagner's Parzival and Bayreuth," Professor Squire Coop, University of California, Southern Branch.
2. Address: "Juan Maragall," Dr. Laurence D. Balliff, University of California, Southern Branch.
3. Business Meeting: Consideration of the Revised Constitution (a copy of which has been sent to every active member).

ALL MODERN LANGUAGE TEACHERS AND THEIR FRIENDS ARE MOST CORDIALLY INVITED TO ATTEND ANY AND ALL OF THE ABOVE GATHERINGS.

OPPORTUNITY FOR JOINING AS MEMBERS AND SUPPORTERS OF OUR ASSOCIATION WILL BE GIVEN.

### GERMAN SECTION

The text book committee of the German Section of M. L. A. S. C. has prepared a report on material for the first two years. This report will be given at the Section meeting April 24th. The committee wishes to call for discussion of its recommendations and therefore suggests that members of the German Section familiarize themselves with the following books:

Schmidt-Glocke, "Das erste Jahr Deutsch" (Heath & Co.); Vos, "Essentials of German" (Holt & Co.); Zeydel, "Elementary German Reader" (Knopf); "Immensee" (Scribner's); Scherer-Diercks, "Deutsche Lieder" (American Book Co.), and Hohfeld, "Deutsches Liederbuch" (Heath & Co.).

F. H. REINSCH, Secretary.



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A copy of the Summer School catalog with application blank may be obtained by addressing: Secretary of the Summer School, Ribera de San Cosme, 71, Mexico City, D. F., or 309A, 1240 South Main Street, Los Angeles, California.

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the lessons are splendidly graduated throughout the text. I am a strong advocate of harmony, in the Pan-American sense, based on actual and personal knowledge of many of the countries in the Americas. I like *Norte y Sur* and I shall recommend it.”—H. S. NIESE, Vice-Consulado de la Republica Argentina, Los Angeles. \$1.36

### Cuentos Mejicanos: CORNYN

“**C**UENTOS MEJICANOS is a very suitable book for high school classes. The introduction is neither too heavy nor too long; it covers the high lights of Mexican history and is interesting. The selection of stories is especially good. They are about the right length, have a point to them and an appeal that is often lacking in other

collections. The make-up of the book is attractive, the size of type satisfactory, and the illustrations are sure to assist the pupil in visualizing the author and relating him to his story. It is the best book of its kind, I think.”—Miss FRANCES MURRAY, Technical High School, Oakland. \$1.28

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